



ALI 241: Akhlāq of the Ahlul Bayt عليهم السلام

Session 8: JCC; 9000 Bathurst St
Tuesday – 22 Dhul Hijjah 1434/
October 28, 2013

From the course outline

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

- Session 8: Use of tongue: it can be the greatest asset and cause to take us to the Paradise or it can drag us to *Jahannam*. Wrong use of tongue causes major sins: sarcasm, backbiting, accusation, swearing and foul language, giving false witness, etc. Great thawāb (Divine rewards), benefits of preoccupying the tongue with adhkar (remembrance of Allah).

Messenger of Allah (s) said: مَا عَمِلَ مَنْ لَمْ يَحْفَظْ لِسَانَهُ

He has not performed any [good] deed, one who does not guard his tongue. (Scale of Wisdom H.4629 from Bihar 77:85)

Quranic Āyāt on tongue

• بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ * مَا يَلْفِظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ ﴿50:18﴾

He says no word but that there is a ready observer beside him

يَوْمَ تَشْهَدُ عَلَيْهِمْ أَلْسِنَتُهُمْ وَأَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَرْجُلُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

24:24 *On the day when witness shall be given against them by their tongues, their hands, and their feet concerning what they used to do*

سَيَقُولُ لَكَ الْمُخَلَّفُونَ مِنَ الْأَعْرَابِ شَغَلَتْنَا أَمْوَالُنَا وَأَهْلُونَا فَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَنَا ۖ
يَقُولُونَ بِأَلْسِنَتِهِمْ مَا لَيْسَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ

48:19 *Those who remained behind of the bedouins will say to you, “Our properties and our families occupied us, so ask forgiveness for us.” They say with their tongues what is not within their hearts.*

Relation betw heart and tongue

- In 23: 1-3 Allah mentions that refraining from vain talk is a sign of the success. This comes after He mentions al-Khushoo'. It may indicate that much talk makes the heart hard. It is not possible to reach the level of Khushoo' (fear of Allah) unless one refrains from vain talk.
- Attributed to Imam Ali (a): *When a word comes from the heart, it falls onto the heart; but when it merely comes from the tongue, it will not go farther than the ears (Sharh Nahjl Balagha)*
- Imam al-Rida (a): *He who seeks forgiveness with his tongue but does not feel remorse in his heart has fooled himself.*
- The Prophet (s): *No sooner does a servant spend his mornings in a state of sincere devotion for forty days than the springs of wisdom will flow from his heart onto his tongue.*
- Imam Ali (a): *Wisdom is a tree that grows in the heart and produces fruit on the tongue.*

Misuse of the tongue

3:78 there is indeed a group of them who twist their tongues to mimic the Book, that you may suppose that it is from the Book, though it is not from the Book, and they say, 'It is from Allah, though it not from Allah, and they attribute lies to Allah, and they know [it].

4:46 Among the Jews are those who pervert words from their meanings and say, 'We hear and disobey' and 'Hear without listening!' and 'Ra'ina,' twisting their tongues and reviling the faith.

16:62 They attribute to Allah what they dislike [for themselves], and their tongues assert the lie and the best reward will be their. Undoubtedly, the Fire shall be their lot and they will be foremost [in entering it].

16:116 Do not say, asserting falsely with your tongues, 'This is lawful, and this is unlawful,' to fabricate lies against Allah.

Silence is the best 'speech'

Imam al-Sadiq (a) in *Misbah al-Shari'ah*: Silence is the mark of those who are certain of the realities . . . it brings Allah's pleasure, a lightening of the reckoning and a protection from errors and mistakes. Allah has made it a veil for the ignorant and an adornment for the man of knowledge. One of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah used to put pebbles in his mouth. When he wanted to say something he knew was [for the pleasure and] for the sake of Allah, he would remove the pebbles. Many of the Companions used . . . to speak like someone who was ill. People's destruction or salvation lies in speech and silence... he who has been exposed to the subtleties of silence . . . then both his speech and silence are worship.

Unable to control his tongue

A vizier, strolling the city late at night, heard a tailor saying to himself, “O my tongue remain under my control tomorrow when I present this shawl to the king.” The next day the vizier saw the tailor at the court of the king. Everyone present liked the stitching and material of the shawl. Each present expressed his opinion on when and where can the king wear the shawl. The king said, ‘let us ask the tailor himself?’ The tailor who had a habit of thinking loudly and saying things thoughtlessly, said, “this shawl would shine well if it were to be shrouded on the corpse of the king!” The king out of anger ordered the tailor to be killed. The vizier intervened and informed the court what he heard previous night. “O king, this man’s tongue is not in his control,” pleaded the vizier. “He does not mean bad for you.” The tailor was released. (Sabir Thariani, *Lessons from Life*, pp. 26-27)

Du'a for correct use of tongue

O Allah, bless Muhammad and his Household, and put . . . the flow of our tongues in the description of Your kindness (*Sahifa*, 5:14); assign the idioms of tongues to that which makes incumbent Your reward (*Sahifa* 9:7); divert our tongues through thanking You from every act of thanksgiving (*Sahifa* 11:1); O Allah, make everything (Satan) causes to pass over my tongue – the indecent or ugly words, the maligning of good repute, the false witness, the speaking ill of an absent believer or reviling of the present and all similar things – a speech in praise of You, preoccupying in Your laudation, an excursion in magnifying You, a gratitude for Your favors, acknowledging Your beneficence, and enumeration of Your kindness (*Sahifa* 20: 13)

Hadiths on tongue

رسول الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): الْجَمَالُ فِي اللِّسَانِ.

Holy Prophet (s): (Real) *beauty lies in tongue* (Scale of Wisdom H.1131)

Imam al-Sadiq (a): كُونُوا دُعَاةً لِلنَّاسِ بِالْخَيْرِ بِغَيْرِ أَلْسِنَتِكُمْ

It was said to the Prophet (s) that, ‘Such and such a woman fasts during the days and stands for prayer during the nights, but she is ill-natured and insults her neighbors with her tongue’, the Prophet (s) then said, ‘*There is no good in her, she is of the people of the Hellfire.*’ (Ibid, H.1956 from Bihar 71: 394)

رسول الله ﷺ: أَمْسِكْ لِسَانَكَ؛ فَإِنَّهَا صَدَقَةٌ تَصَدِّقُ بِهَا عَلَى نَفْسِكَ

Holy Prophet (s): *Rein your tongue, for surely it is a charity that you offer to your own self* (Ibid, H. 3529)

الإمام الصادق (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): إِنَّ أَبْغَضَ خَلْقِ اللَّهِ عَبْدًا اتَّقَى النَّاسُ لِسَانَهُ

Al-Sadiq (a): *The most despised amongst the creature of Allah, is a person from whose tongue people fear* (Ibid, H. 814)

Good use of tongue

- Articulating of faith. HP الإِيمَانُ مَعْرِفَةٌ بِالْقَلْبِ، وَقَوْلٌ بِاللِّسَانِ، وَعَمَلٌ بِالْأَرْكَانِ

The faith is knowledge thru heart, attesting with tongue and actions with limbs (Scale of Wisdom, H. 523)

- Dhikr & Tasbih of Allah: وَادْكُرْ رَبَّكَ كَثِيرًا وَسَبِّحْ بِالْعِشِيِّ وَالْإِبْكَارِ

Remember your Lord abundantly and glorify (Him) in the evening and in the morning (Q 3:41, also ref. 33:41 & 62:10)

Du'a and Istighfar: tongue helps in doing these.

HP (s): The best form of charity is charity with one's tongue through which lives are spared, adversities repelled, and benefits attracted towards one's Muslim brother. (SoW, H. 3535)

Defense of Islam: HP (s): *He who sees wrong being done should redress the situation with his own hand, and if he cannot do so then with his tongue*

Harms of the tongue

Ruining of fast – Bibi Fatima (a): *What is the fasting person doing with his fast if he is not guarding his tongue, his hearing, his sight and his limbs [from sins]!?* (SoW, H.3728)

Playing with words - HP (s): Allah despises the eloquent man who plays with his tongue like a drill.

We are judged – Imam Ali (a): *The intellect of every man can be determined by the words that flow on his tongue.*

Can take us to Hell – al-Sadiq (a): *A person whose [foul] tongue people dread is in the Fire [i.e. his place is the Fire].*

Hypocrisy – Imam al-Sadiq (a): *He who meets his fellow Muslims two-facedly and hypocritically [lit. having two-tongues] will be raised on the Day of Resurrection with two tongues of Fire. (Also, see Q63:1, How are hypocrites chided).*

Daily *adhkaar* – remember Allah

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ – Imam al-Baqir or al-Sadiq (a): *The heaviest thing to be placed on the scales on the Day of Resurrection is the invocation of blessings on Muhammad and his household (a).* (SoW, H. 3673 & the following: Ibid, H. 2323))

Imam al-Sadiq (a): *Tasbeih Fatimah al-Zahra (a)* is the frequent remembrance which Allah mentions [in 33:41]: اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا

Imam Ali says that the Prophet taught him to say at the time of difficulty or affliction: بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ، وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ this will ward off all sort of afflictions.

Imam al-Sadiq (a): One who prays for 40 believers before he prays for himself, his Du'a gets accepted.

Holy Prophet (a): one who recites *ayatul kursi* whilst he is *sajdah*, he will never enter the Hell (Bihar 92:269). He who recites *suratul Qadr*, he is given the reward of a person fasting in Ramadan and keeping awake during *laylatul Qadr*.

Dhikr benefits the poor & rich

A few poor people complained to the Prophet (s): “The rich perform acts of goodness like freeing slaves, giving charity, performing the Hajj etc., which are beyond our means (as a result, they shall be in possession of greater rewards than us).” The Prophet (s) said: “One, who recites *Allahu Akbar* a hundred times, shall be granted rewards which shall exceed the rewards of freeing one hundred slaves. One, who recites *Subhana Allah* a hundred times, shall come to possess rewards better than the rewards associated with the performance of Hajj. Reciting *Alhamdulillah* a hundred times is better than giving one hundred fully laden horses as charity in the way of Allah. One, who recites *La Ilaha Illallah* a hundred times, shall be of the best of the people on the Day of Judgment.” The rich too began to recite the Dhikr. The poor protested, “The rich too have started to act upon your recommendations!” The Prophet responded, “This is Allah’s grace; He grants it to whomsoever He pleases”